

Message Text

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USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOISA 1356

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD
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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, CY
SUBJ: CYPRIOT LEFTISTS ATTACK CLERIDES FOR "USURPATION OF POWER"

1. SUMMARY. LEFTIST LEADERS IN CYPRIOT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ATTACK CLERIDES MAY 19 FOR ILLEGAL "USURPATION OF POWER" IN 1974. TASSOS PAPADOPOULOS MAKES HALF-HEARTED DEFENSE OF CLERIDES, CLAIMING LATTER ACTED MISTAKENLY BUT "HIS MISTAKES WERE SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR RESTORING ORDER." FERVOR OF ANTI-CLERIDES OUTBURST AT THIS TIME MAY REFLECT DETERMINATION
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OF ANTI-CLERIDES ELEMENTS TO REMOVE CLERIDES' NAME ONCE AND FOR ALL FROM LIST OF POSSIBLE MAKARIOS SUCCESSORS.
END SUMMARY

2. IN CYPRIOT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MAY 19, EDEK LEADER LYSSARIDES TABLED QUESTION OF "USURPATION OF POWER" FOR DEBATE. HE CHARGED THAT 1974 COUP "WAS ENGINEERED TO SET

IN POWER NOT SAMPSON BUT CLERIDES," WHO HAD BEEN WORKING WITH THE GREEK JUNTA AND EOKA-B SINCE 1972 TO REPLACE MAKARIOS. LYSSARIDES CLAIMED THAT CLERIDES HAD ADMITTED TO HIM IN 1974 THAT HE HAD TAKEN POWER FROM SAMPSON AT THE SUGGESTION OF THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR (DAVIES) WHO WAS ACTING AS EMISSARY OF THE "NATIONAL GOVERNMENT" (GREECE) AND THAT CLERIDES AND THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR AT THAT TIME WERE IN DAILY CONTACT. LYSSARIDES FURTHER CHARGED CLERIDES WITH UNCONSTITUTIONALLY TAKING OATH OF OFFICE AS PRESIDENT BEFORE A DEFROCKED BISHOP, WITH CALLING FOR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN 1974 WHILE ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS WAS STILL LEGAL PRESIDENT, WITH CONTINUING COUPISTS IN POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND DISMISSING MAKARIOS-LOYALISTS. LYSSARIDES CONCLUDED THAT "THE USURPERS OF POWER SHOULD BE BROUGHT IMMEDIATELY TO JUSTICE OTHERWISE THE IMPRISONMENT OF SAMPSON IS A COMIC TRAVESTY."

3. COMMUNIST AKEL LEADER PAPAIOANNOU REGRETTED THAT CLERIDES HAD NOT, ON ASSUMING POWER IN 1974, "RESTORED CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER BY CALLING ON MAKARIOS TO RETURN TO CYPRUS." DENYING ANY DESIRE FOR RETALIATION, THE COMMUNIST DEPUTY CLAIMED IT IS NECESSARY TO PUNISH THE GUILTY, "THE HIDEOUS PUTCHISTS WHO ARE READY TO COME BACK WITH A VENGEANCE AND COMPLETE THE CALAMITY."

4. FINAL SPEAKER WAS GREEK CYPRIOT NEGOTIATOR AND INDEPENDENT REPRESENTATIVE TASSOS PAPADOPOULOS WHO CONCEDED HE HAD OFTEN DISAGREED WITH CLERIDES BUT OPPOSED
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PERSONAL ATTACKS AGAINST HIM. CLERIDES' MISTAKES WERE POLITICAL AND THE PEOPLE OF CYPRUS HAD PUNISHED HIM POLITICALLY IN 1976 BY ELIMINATING HIM AND HIS PARTY FROM THE HOUSE. IN JUDGING CLERIDES, PAPADOPOULOS ADMONISHED THE HOUSE TO RECALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE SUMMER OF 1974 AND SUGGESTED CLERIDES' ERRORS WERE A SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR BRINGING THE STATE OUT OF THE CHAOS OF THOSE DAYS. HE SAID CLERIDES HAD NEVER USURPED POWER SINCE THE CONSTITUTION PROVIDED FOR HIM, AS PRESIDENT OF THE HOUSE, BECOMING ACTING PRESIDENT WHEN MAKARIOS LEFT THE ISLAND. PAPADOPOULOS REMINDED THE HOUSE THAT AT LEAST TWO OF THE MINISTERS APPOINTED BY CLERIDES IN 1974 CONTINUE TO SERVE IN MAKARIOS' CABINET TODAY. HOUSE DEBATE ON "USURPATION OF POWER" WILL CONTINUE NEXT WEEK.

5. ISSUE OF CLERIDES' "USURPATION OF POWER" IN 1974 HAS BEEN FAVORITE THEME OF FANATIC ANTI-CLERIDES GROUP IN LYSSARIDES' CAMP FOR SOME TIME. THE CHARGE RECEIVED A CLOAK OF RESPECTABILITY MAY 14, WHEN THE NICOSIA DISTRICT

COURT, DELIVERING JUDGMENT IN A LIBEL CASE, OBSERVED CLERIDES HAD BEEN ACTING OUTSIDE THE CONSTITUTION WHEN IN 1974 HE TOOK AN OATH AS PRESIDENT AND CALLED FOR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN SIX MONTHS. COURT ALSO COMMENTED ADVERSELY ON CLERIDES' COOPERATION WITH COUPIST MINISTERS AND EOKA-B ACTIVISTS. CLERIDES' DEMOCRATIC RALLY PARTY MAY 17 ISSUED STATEMENT DEFENDING ITS LEADER, RESERVING RIGHT TO RESPOND TO CHARGES WHEN COURT ORDER BECOMES FINAL BUT RECALLING THAT BOTH MAKARIOS AND KARAMANLIS PUBLICLY EXPRESSED THANKS TO CLERIDES FOR WHAT HE HAD DONE DURING THAT PERIOD.

6. COMMENT: LYSSARIDES' SURPRISE MOVE IN THE HOUSE MAY 19 IS THE LATEST STEP IN A CAMPAIGN, DATING BACK TO 1974, BY GREEK CYPRIOT LEFTISTS TO DISCREDIT CLERIDES. IN PART IT REFLECTS THEIR RESENTMENT THAT HE WAS ABLE TO TAKE CONTROL AND GOVERN CYPRUS IN ABSENCE OF ARCHBISHOP WITHOUT INCLUDING THE LEFT. THERE IS ALSO A DIFFERENCE OVER POLICY AS CLERIDES
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HAS CONSISTENTLY ADVOCATED CYPRUS ALIGNMENT WITH THE WEST. FINALLY, THURSDAY'S PARLIAMENTARY OUTBURST IS PART OF A CONTINUING EFFORT TO BURY CLERIDES POLITICALLY AND ELIMINATE HIM FOR GOOD AS A CONTENDER TO SUCCEED MAKARIOS.
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